INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET

International application No. PCT/EP2005/000406

AP20 Rec'd PCT/PTO 18 JUL 2006

Concerning Point V

Reasoned assessment relating to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability; citations and explanations to support this assessment

The following documents cited in the search report are mentioned in this decision; the numbering will also be maintained in the further proceedings:

D1: US 2003/01 96305 (Kebbede et al.) 23 October 2003

D2: EP 1 251 191 (ALSTOM (Switzerland) Ltd) 23 October 2002

D3: US 5 444 911 (Goodwater et al.) 29 August 1995

1

D1 discloses a method for repairing a damaged and/or aged component of a turbomachine which is at least partially made of a composite ceramic material (see paragraph [0002]), having the steps of: dissolving the joint of the component (implicit), leaching out the matrix and/or mechanically processing the component (see paragraphs [0034]-[0035]), infiltration to restore and/or renew the ceramic matrix of the component (see paragraph [0038]) and restoring the joint (implicit), the site to be repaired, which has resulted from the mechanical processing of the component, being filled with a single monobloc insert (see in particular paragraphs 6 to 8).

The subject-matter of Claim 1 therefore differs from the method known from D1 in that the insert does not constitute a mat or a band, so that the insert is characterized by a high strength (only bands, which do not have a high strength since a band is flexible, are used in D1). The solution proposed in Claim 1 is therefore novel (Article 33(2) PCT) and is based on an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT).

2

D2 discloses a method for repairing a damaged and/or aged component of a gas turbine (see paragraph [0007]), which is at least partially made of a composite ceramic material (see abstract) having the steps of: leaching out the matrix and/or mechanically processing the component (see column 4, lines 5-17), infiltration to restore and/or renew the ceramic matrix of the component (see column 4, lines 18-25) and sintering the component (see column 4, lines 25-29).

The subject-matter of Claim 7 therefore differs from the method known from D2 in that the gas turbine is overfired. The subject-matter of this claim is therefore novel. Overfiring the gas turbine makes it possible to bind the ceramic matrix on the component installed in the gas turbine. The sintering can thus be carried out particularly advantageously when the component

is in the installed state. The subject-matter of this claim is therefore based on an inventive step.

3

The remaining claims are dependent on Claim 1 or 7 and therefore likewise fulfill the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and inventive step.